

Echoes of Religious Thought.

BY W. K. AZBILL.

Prayer for 'sustaining grace' in many instances might be changed to petitions for restraining grace. David so prayed when he said, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins."

Providential hindrance should be regarded as a mode of divine guidance. The steel rails which support and guide an express train oppose but little resistance except around curves; and there even the best of rolling stock will develop friction. So the best of Christians sometimes, but when the Guiding Hand overbears and changes their self chosen courses. In Acts, 16:6-10, the Apostles seem to have been guided in part by hindrances.

Paul the Apostle once prayed that he might have 'a prosperous journey according to the will of God'; and he made that journey in bonds. Nevertheless, it was a prosperous journey. The Lord gave him all who sailed with him, including, of course, the soldier to whom he was chained; and he evangelized the island on which the ship was wrecked. Beginning from Jerusalem the journey embraced some of his rarest opportunities to preach the gospel to nobles, rulers, and kings; and he had occasion to rejoice again and again that, though he was in bonds, the gospel was not bound.

'A thorn in the flesh' was once a 'grace sufficient' for a good man; but it was after he had been 'caught up into the third heaven' that he was able to accept it as such.

A single Sunday's missionary collection amounting to thousands of dollars from even the leading congregation in a little city the size of Honolulu, ought to cause an echo of religious thought to reverberate throughout the wealthy city churches on the main land.

Missionary Rally.

The missionary rally at the Central Union Church, Honolulu, was an event of vast interest. Reports and other information touching the work of the Hawaiian Board in the Gilbert islands, and other groups north of the Equator, the rousing address of Dr. Bingham of the Gilbert island field, and of Dr. Bishop of Hawaii; the symbolic representation of the original condition of the heathen races, of the progress made in the way of their civilization and of the good results of educational work, and the enthusiastic and liberal response of the great audience, whose contributions footed up \$10,356.00, would require a volume if properly set forth. The meeting was remarkable for the

many nationalities represented. There were English, Americans, Germans, Portuguese, Hawaiians, Chinese, Japanese, Gilbert islanders, and half-castes, all taking part in the exercises. A large and finely executed missionary map of the Western Pacific, embracing the Hawaiian islands and the Philippines and New Guinea, stretched entirely across the gallery of the immense audience room. A symbolic ladder showed the step by step progress of the Gilbert Islanders out of the darkest and deepest of modern paganism into their present condition of semi-civilization under the care of the missionaries, the author of their hymn book and translator of their Bible, Dr. Bingham, being present and witnessing the representation which justly placed his work on the top-most round of the ladder, and these symbolic paraphernalia being brought in and exhibited by a company of forty Gilbert Islanders, themselves the most telling proof of the good work done by the gospel in their remote and belated islands.

But the most important transaction of the notable occasion, perhaps, was the endorsement of the following resolution which had been previously adopted by the Hawaiian Board:

"Resolved, That whereas, in the wonderful providence of God, there has been opened just now a door for centuries shut, a door to a very large island of thirty-six thousand square miles, Mindanao, of the Philippines, bounding Micronesia on the west, and so comparatively our near neighbor, and now under the American flag, inhabited by one million people, among whom there cannot be found a single Protestant missionary, or a Bible translated into any of the various languages of the island, save one, and that spoken but by a small Malay tribe, this Board would make known to its constituency its great desire to enter this door at the earliest possible date, and to co-operate, if feasible, with the American Board in the immediate evangelization of Mindanao."

Surely this purposeful resolution will touch a responsive cord in the hearts of all Christians wherever it may be read, and will stimulate others to join in the unselfish work proposed.

Nothing New.

In a sermon preached in Holy Trinity Church, Sunday, May 7, Dr. Briggs, evidently replying to his critics, after declaring his faith in "a canon of Holy Scripture which has been recognized by the church in its confession and worship, and by the individual Christ-

ian in his experience in all ages at the Divine Word, containing all things necessary for our salvation and setting the bounds beyond which no man or church may exact anything from us as regard our final redemption," proceeds to say that "The new methods of study, the critical and scientific processes of investigation which in our times dominate all the realms of knowledge, inevitable require change in the realm of religion and theology also * * * * the Christian organization, as the Apostle tells us, is growing from infancy to full manhood * * * * Let us thank God that the church is growing when we see changes taking place in its forms and modes and in its statements of truth. Now we know that the church is alive and that it is conscious of the Divine Spirit dwelling in it, and that the Divine Spirit is in reality guiding it into all truth."

There is much else in the sermon which shows his belief to be that the Spirit which moved holy men of old to speak, is still guiding "all this wondrous critical study," is "leading the church on step by step and is so fulfilling the promise of Jesus to guide it into the whole truth."

Now, if all this means anything other than what we have heard from all the Sunday School teachers and all the ministers who have taught us from childhood, what is it, but the doctrine of George Fox and Margaret Fell, and after them, of the whole society of friends, the *lumen internum*, the inner light whose guidance is as unerring and as infallible now as when it moved the holy men of old? Be it said again that the main thing which keeps up the interest in Briggsism is the irritation he cause by staying where, or by getting into positions where, he seems to represent those who do not endorse his notions.

A New Club House.

The Rev. Victor Morgan has undertaken the conduct of a Temperance Club House in Honolulu, for which he has secured the premises known as the Eagle Hotel. His aim will be to provide entertainment, innocent amusements, and wholesome literature, in a place conducted after the model of a Christian home, for men who being strangers in the city, are deprived of the restraining and ennobling influences which every Christian home affords. The enterprise deserves to succeed, and it is gratifying to hear that it is to have the substantial aid of quite a few of the benevolently inclined in the community. Mr. Morgan has had experience in such work in San Francisco. He is sanguine, and he inspires with hope those with whom he speaks about his undertaking.

"What do I learn from the nail? The farther 'tis hammered the firmer it holds."

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